

Finally, the bill will provide assistance to small businesses in need of capital and investment financing, procurement assistance or management counseling. The incentives include physical and economic injury disaster loans, reductions in interest rates, and easier approval standards on Guaranteed Business Loans.

Small businesses across our Nation are in great need of economic assistance. The vitality of this sector is of crucial importance to our economy. This bill will allow thousands of working families the opportunity to maintain a reasonable standard of living, and give small business owners the boost they need to maintain and hopefully grow their businesses.

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO THE MEXICAN SENATE FOR ITS SUPPORT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

Mr. DODD. Madam President, last week representatives of the Mexican Senate came to the U.S. Senate to meet with legislators and express their support for the U.S.-led effort against terrorism. Mexico has always been a close neighbor and friend to the United States, and the Senators traveled here to ensure us that, in this time of need, our friend and ally Mexico stands by us.

The delegation of Mexican Senators presented the Majority Leader, Mr. DASCHLE, with a letter from Diego Fernandez De Cevallos, the President of the Mexican Senate, which expresses the Mexican Senate's condolences in the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11th. That letter also contained a statement from the entire membership of the Mexican Senate commenting on the attacks and the unique relationship between Mexico and the United States. I think that my colleagues would benefit from seeing these comments in the RECORD.

At times like these every expression of support from our allies is important. However, given the special relationship between the United States and Mexico, it is even more important to see evidence that our allegiance is strong. These letters prove exactly that. I thank the Mexican Senate for their support.

I ask unanimous consent that the letter and statement from the Mexican Senators be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MEXICO D.F.,
October 2, 2001.

Hon. TOM DASCHLE,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Capitol Building,
Washington DC.

DEAR SENATOR DASCHLE: On the occasion of the visit of a delegation of Mexican Senators to the United States, and in the name of the Senate of the Republic of Mexico, allow me to express to the people and to the Government of the United States, our profound shock and most sincere condolences with respect to the acts of terrorism perpetrated on September 11, 2001 against humanity itself.

It is truly hard to find words adequate to convey the sadness and anguish that all Mexicans feel at the loss of so many innocent lives.

As legislators there are many things we can do together with the U.S. and other Congresses to confront the barbaric threat of terrorism of any kind, as well as the harm that is caused by various forms of fanaticism.

We declare ourselves once again unequivocally in favor of peace, justice, and international solidarity.

I have asked the delegation of Mexican Senators who are visiting your Congress this week to provide you with a copy of the statement which was made by the Mexican Senate on September 11 in response to that tragic act, which we also provided to his Excellency Ambassador Jeffrey Davidow so that it might be known to the American people and the Government of the United States.

Sincerely,

DIEGO FERNANDEZ DE CEVALLOS,
President of the Mexican Senate.

STATEMENT OF THE MEXICAN SENATE

September 11, 2001.

"The Mexican Senate wishes to express to the Government of the United States of America as well as to all Nations, its most profound sympathy and deep indignation relative to the barbarous acts which today have offended the entire world.

"The Mexican Senate calls upon all men and women of good faith to prevent this tragedy from escalating into an interminable blood bath.

"Let us bring together the governments and peoples of the world to work together to guard against further harm; to scrupulously respect human rights throughout the world; and to build together a peaceful, dignified, and just world for all mankind."

THE U.S. ROLE IN OCEAN EXPLORATION

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, as we contend with the threats of global terrorism and our national sorrow in the aftermath of September 11th, we must focus on the accomplishments, ideals, and spirit that make America great and look to the future with a renewed sense of resolve and hope. As we engaged in exploring the American continent in the 19th century, and the far reaches of space in the 20th century, we must welcome, in this new century, the challenge of exploring our oceans, the last uncharted frontier. Oceans make up 70 percent of the earth's surface, yet we have characterized less than ten percent of the United States' Exclusive Economic Zone. Within our EEZ, the United States has jurisdiction over more submerged lands than terrestrial lands. Newly charted research voyages and state-of-the-art underwater technology give us the tools we need to make new discoveries to aid us in better understanding this underwater world.

My focus on ocean exploration is timely because the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration celebrated the culmination of two voyages of discovery in Charleston, South Carolina, on October 1, 2001. The "Deep East Expedition" and "Islands in the Stream" projects represent two impor-

tant steps in revitalizing our exploration of the oceans. Through these journeys, NOAA scientists and their partners are uncovering the ocean's secrets.

The "Deep East Expedition" sailed from Maine to Georgia to investigate the diversity of deep-sea coral beds and gas hydrate communities that may contain new energy resources. On a simultaneous timetable, "Islands in the Stream" followed the Gulf Stream both from Belize to North Carolina. Scientists investigated ocean currents in the Gulf of Mexico, dove in submersibles examining coral reef and hard-bottom communities, and conducted acoustic surveys to characterize the ocean floor. NOAA partnered on these two projects with Woods Hole and Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institutes, the National Geographic Society, numerous universities and other federal agencies, such as NASA and the U.S. Geological Survey.

This summer, NOAA's flagship research vessel, the *Ronald H. Brown*, returned from an unparalleled journey of discovery in the undersea Astoria Canyon, beyond the mouth of the Columbia River in Oregon. This voyage was titled the "Lewis and Clark Legacy Expedition" and was intended to be an extension of that historic journey which ended at the mouth of the Columbia River almost two hundred years ago. The scientists discovered two new species of invertebrates and viewed deep-water communities never before seen, at depths of over one half mile. Using advanced sonar technology, scientists created three-dimensional views of the canyon's sea floor texture and discovered an ancient shoreline from the last ice age, over 17,000 years ago. These discoveries will help answer questions about how glaciers, earthquakes, and plate movement affect the earth's geological history and its future.

Just as Thomas Jefferson commissioned Lewis and Clark in 1803 to gather scientific facts of the uncharted Western lands, so too must we be visionary in commissioning our best scientists to map and discover unknown reaches of the oceans. We must duplicate Jefferson's "Corps of Discovery" for our ocean depths. This undiscovered domain is believed to contain many times the biomass of all the rainforests and terrestrial life forms combined.

Today's pioneers in ocean exploration have already embarked upon this journey. Just as explorers of the past mapped the mountain ranges and the riverways of our nation, these modern explorers have begun mapping the ranges and riverways beneath the surface of the ocean. Two weeks ago Congress heard many of these explorers, researchers and managers speak about the important role of the oceans in global climate change, weather patterns and carbon cycling, as we celebrated the first annual Congressional Oceans Day. Presenters highlighted the successes of ocean exploration and the challenges that lie ahead.